Appendix F
Aquatic Invasive Plan Control Framework Strategy

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The Sawtooth and Boise National Forest's proposed Invasive Plant Treatment Program includes a "Framework Strategy" for dealing with current and future aquatic invasive plant treatments. The Framework has been identified to facilitate and expedite a treatment response when an aquatic infestation is identified. Elements of the Framework serve to:

> Specifically identify key agency and non-agency partners;
>
> Establish a routine opportunity for interagency collaboration regarding inspections, potential treatment methods (chemical and/or mechanical), agency responsibilities, funding opportunities, new products/literature;
>
> Document steps for developing response plans to address any future infestations (e.g., action plans);
>
> Document any future aquatic treatments (chemical, physical, mechanical) in ESA listed waters. Identify the need for completion of the appropriate type of site specific ESA consultation prior to implementation of any chemical, mechanical or cultural treatment. Determinations regarding the need for ESA consultation, and determining agency responsibilities for conducting it, would be made on a case-by-case basis. Expedited consultation may be used when it is determined that the infestation threats to property, life, or resources are imminent. Treatment would follow design criteria identified in this EIS. The framework process should provide a means to have potential treatment tools pre-identified to expedite response and completion of any necessary emergency or standard ESA consultation.

There are a number of factors that weed managers would use to determine the appropriate treatment of an aquatic invasive plant infestation, and measures that would need to be taken to prevent spread to other nearby water bodies. The State of Idaho, Department of Agriculture (ISDA, 2012) has a set response to the detection of new aquatic invaders, including the following:

The following example illustrates the framework for response to an aquatic invasive plant infestation.

- Verify reported detection
- Once the aquatic invasive plant infestation was detected, SNF or BNF weed managers would collect samples for verification of the identification of the weed species
- Make initial notifications to all relevant program managers
    - SNF/BNF weed managers would notify the Forest Supervisor, District Ranger and other program managers (e.g. range, recreation and special uses) as well as the ISDA and County Weed Program Managers.
- Define extent of colonization
    - SNF/BNF in cooperation with ISDA would conduct another inventory of the affected waters to detect additional aquatic invasive plant infestations and would also inventory other nearby water bodies to learn if the infestation was confined to just the one location or is already present in other water bodies.

  - Set up interagency response management team
  - SNF/BNF would coordinate with the Idaho state aquatic invasive species coordinator and relevant weed program managers in the county in which the infestation is located.

- For ESA listed waters, or actions that may affect downstream ESA-listed waters, identify needs for ESA Consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, or both.
  - Initiate emergency or non-emergency consultation with appropriate Services at this stage.
- Establish external communications system
  - The interagency response management team would work together to identify water users who could be affected by the aquatic invasive plant infestation and by potential eradication efforts. A variety of communication tools could be used including e-mail, phone calls, letters, personal visits, website posts, radio, newspaper, etc.
- Organize resources (personnel, equipment, funds)
  - The interagency response management team would determine and organize the resources needed to conduct inventories for other water bodies potentially infested, notify water users, identify a proposed eradication treatment, and initiate a monitoring program.
- Prevent further spread via quarantine and pathway management
  - Since the risk of vectoring aquatic invasive plant infestations to other nearby water bodies would be very high, SNF/BNF weed managers MAY recommend to the Forest Supervisor and District Ranger that an emergency closure order be placed in effect for the WATER BODY at least until the initial phase of treatment and monitoring was complete.
- Launch available /relevant control actions
  - In order to determine the treatment options available to eradicate an aquatic invasive plant infestation, weed managers would need to define the characteristics of the invasive species, the characteristics of the infested waters and human uses of the waters.
  - Weed managers would consider the available range of treatment options to eradicate the infestation. Eradication is the SNF/BNF management objective for aquatic invasive plants because they are new invaders that are not present elsewhere on forests. Eradication helps prevent the movement of aquatic invaders from one water body to another.
- Treatment*: The forests would work with ISDA on jurisdiction of treatment waters and potential cooperative funding available for EDRR treatment of state listed noxious weeds. In-water herbicide treatments require an NPDES permit and requires specific NPDES and FIFRA posting and monitoring requirements. ISDA or the County would obtain the NPDES permit for the treatment.

- For small infestations: First priority would be to utilize physical or mechanical treatment methods to control aquatic infestations such as hand removal or diver assisted suction harvesting to remove plants. Benthic barriers can also be a tool for eradicating small populations.
- Larger infestation: Herbicides are the most effective tool for larger populations. Herbicide selection would depend on target species, treatment location and water movement. Some species and the herbicides used to treat them include:
  - Eurasian watermilfoil: Systemic herbicides: 2,4-D, triclopyr,
  - Hydrilla: Imazamox
  - Flowering rush: Imazapyr.
  - Yellow floating heart: 2,4-D, triclopyr, glyphosate.

*Future aquatic treatments carried out by the State in waters identified by the Idaho Department of Lands as navigable, and do not involve the use and occupancy of NFS lands as defined in 36 CFR251.50 are considered State actions. Under these circumstances, aquatic treatments are not considered a Forest Service action requiring a NEPA decision, a Forest Service special use authorization and ESA section 7(2)(a)consultation.

Citations

Idaho State Department of Agriculture. 2012. The Idaho Invasive Species Strategic Plan: 2012-2016. http://invasivespecies.idaho.gov/invsp-programrp